CHAPTER 6
URBAN OPERATIONS

Urban environments include some of the world's most difficult terrain in which to conduct military operations. Urban terrain confronts commanders with a combination of difficulties rarely found in other environments. Cities vary immensely depending on their history, the cultures of their inhabitants, their economic development, the local climate, available building materials, and many other factors The urban environment, like all environments, is neutral and affects all sides equally. The leader that can best understand and exploit the effects of the urban area has the best chance of success.

The US has worldwide interests that directly relate to global security. As a result, US forces will be deployed into urban environments to neutralize or stabilize extremely volatile political situations or defeat an enemy force that has sought protection afforded by urban terrain. The SBCT is uniquely equipped and manned to confront the challenges of defeating an asymmetrical threat from an enemy force operating in an urban environment. This chapter provides the tools necessary for planning and executing missions in an urban environment as an SBCT.

Section I. THE SBCT'S ROLE IN URBAN OPERATIONS

Although the close combat during urban operations (UO) is infantry-centric, SBCT, armor, and mechanized units operate as an integral force in both shaping and decisive operations. SBCT, armor, and mechanized units are the optimal forces to isolate or prevent enemy reinforcement during urban operations. They operate with light infantry forces in the close fight by providing precise and overwhelming firepower and the ability to gain positional advantage over the enemy.

6-1. ISOLATION

Isolation holds the key to victory in urban operations. If the attacker fails to isolate the urban area, the defender can reinforce and resupply his forces, protracting the operation and significantly decreasing the attacker's resources and his will to continue. If the defender becomes isolated, the attacker will seize the initiative and can force the defender to take considerable risk (such as a breakout or executing a counterattack) to survive. SBCT, armor, and mechanized forces are optimal for executing isolation operations because they possess the speed, agility, firepower, and protection necessary to successfully shape the urban area for offensive or defensive operations.

6-2. CLOSE COMBAT

The SBCT operates with infantry forces in the close fight providing fires and shock effect to defeat the enemy and his will to resist. Historically, the close fight in urban combat has consisted of street-to-street fighting resulting in high casualties and high expenditure of resources. The SBCT possesses the capability to use precision fires and maneuver to gain positional advantage and seize the initiative away from the enemy. The SBCT uses FBCB2, maneuver, and situational understanding to properly position forces and destroy

the enemy as he reacts to threats from multiple directions. The SBCT relies on its capability to maneuver as a result of its enhanced situational understanding to destroy the enemy. This capability affords the SBCT a primary advantage in accomplishing assigned missions in urban environments.

Section II. FUNDAMENTALS OF URBAN OPERATIONS

Urban operations are among the most difficult and challenging missions a brigade can undertake. To understand the complexity of the urban battlefield, the SBCT commander and his staff apply the following tactical fundamentals.

6-3. PERFORM FOCUSED INFORMATION OPERATIONS AND AGGRESSIVE ISR OPERATIONS

The density of noncombatants and information sources make effective IO a necessity when confronted with any mission in an urban area. The SBCT may be highly successful in its execution of tactical operations on a consistent basis, but a failure to control the information flow from within the urban area could result in overall mission failure. The SBCT must leverage the IO capability found in the FECC in order to gain and maintain information superiority throughout all phases of the urban operation. In order to develop an effective course of action, the SBCT commander and his staff must initiate aggressive ISR operations. Urban operations require significant HUMINT reconnaissance because sensors and other technological devices may not be as effective in such environments. The SBCT has a significant HUMINT capability that is coordinated by the S2x through the HUMINT operations cell. Additionally, the SBCT can leverage the HUMINT assets found within the cavalry squadron (RSTA) to accomplish its ISR goals. Using the C2 INFOSYS, the staff can develop urban maps that include a common reference system (such as numbering buildings) to assist subordinate units with C2.

6-4. UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN DIMENSION

The human dimension of the urban environment often has the most significance and greatest potential for affecting the outcome of UO. The SBCT commander must carefully consider and understand how to influence the allegiance and morale of a civilian population that may decisively affect operations. The SBCT commander must assesses the attitudes, culture, and factional allegiances present in the urban environment when planning his COA.

6-5. SEPARATE NONCOMBATANTS FROM COMBATANTS

Promptly separating noncombatants from combatants facilitates UO by reducing some of the restrictions on firepower and enhancing force protection. Using attached PSYOP and CA units, the SBCT can diminish some of the enemy's asymmetrical advantages. This important task becomes more difficult when the adversary is an unconventional force that can mix with the civilian population. The SBCT commander should also consider coordinating with international organizations if large numbers of refugees are expected.

6-6. AVOID THE ATTRITION APPROACH

UO that use linear and methodical COAs based on firepower normally result in high casualties and significant collateral damage. Enemy forces tend to encourage this

approach to lengthen the operation, expend US resources, and challenge our will to sustain attritional engagements. SBCT commanders should only consider this approach if required to do so or when attempting to gain contact or fix enemy forces as part of a larger operation.

6-7. CONTROL THE ESSENTIAL
Many urban areas are too large to be completely occupied or even effectively controlled by either friendly or enemy forces. The SBCT focuses its efforts on controlling only those areas that are essential to mission accomplishment. At a minimum, this requires control of terrain whose possession or control provides a marked advantage. In the urban environment, key terrain may be determined by its functional, political, or social significance. By controlling what is essential, the SBCT commander can concentrate combat power where it is needed. This decision implies risk in those areas that he chooses not to control in order to mass overwhelming combat power in other areas.

6-8. MINIMIZE COLLATERAL DAMAGE
By employing the C2 INFOSYS, the SBCT commander develops an understanding of the urban AO. The SBCT commander refines his visualization and, with the staff, develops COAs that maximize fires and effects without inflicting unnecessary collateral damage. The SBCT commander determines what firepower restrictions are necessary that will still allow for mission accomplishment, and he then compensates for them through information operations, PSYOP, or CA operations.

6-9. CONDUCT CLOSE COMBAT
Urban operations require closing with the enemy and decisively defeating him. Close combat in UO is resource intensive, requires properly trained and equipped forces, and has the potential for high casualties. The SBCT must use close combat as its decisive operation only after shaping the urban area through aggressive ISR, isolation, and the use of precision fires. While close combat is essential for defeating a determined enemy, the SBCT commander leverages his knowledge of the enemy to avoid costly house-to-house fighting. By maintaining a COP with his subordinate commanders, the SBCT commander can direct the infantry battalions to move out of direct contact with the enemy to a position of advantage and choose the place and time where he wants to join the enemy in close combat.

6-10. TRANSITION CONTROL
UO must be planned to accomplish assigned missions in the most expeditious manner. The end state of UO is the transfer of control to civilian or other agency control. The SBCT must thoroughly develop a transition plan that ensures the restoration of peaceful conditions and avoids further disruption to stability within the AO.

6-11. RESTORE ESSENTIAL SERVICES
The SBCT commander must plan to restore essential services that may fail to function upon their arrival or cease to function during an operation. Essential services include power, food, water, sewage, medical care, and law enforcement. When planning for and conducting Army UO, units can use less destructive munitions and capabilities to keep

potentially vital infrastructure intact. Initially, the SBCT may be the only element able to restore or provide essential services. Failure to do so may result in serious health problems for the civilians, which can affect the health of the SBCT and negatively impact overall mission success. The SBCT must be prepared to transfer responsibility for providing essential services to other agencies, international organizations, or the local government as quickly as possible.

6-12. PRESERVE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The SBCT commanders must analyze the urban area to identify critical infrastructure and attempt to preserve the critical elements for post-combat sustainment operations, stability operations, support operations, or the health and well-being of the indigenous population. Urban areas remain in the AO after combat operations have ceased. Post-combat UO are unavoidable. The SBCT may have to initiate actions to prevent an enemy or a hostile civilian group from removing or destroying critical infrastructure. Such infrastructure may include cultural resources such as religious and historical places. In some cases, preserving the infrastructure may be the assigned objective of the urban operation.

Section III. TACTICAL CHALLENGES

The SBCT will face a number of challenges during the planning, preparation for, and execution of urban operations.

6-13. CONTIGUOUS AND NONCONTIGUOUS AREAS OF OPERATIONS

The SBCT must be prepared to conduct full spectrum operations in both contiguous and non-contiguous AOs.

a. The SBCT conducts contiguous operations in an AO that facilitates mutual support of combat, CS, and CSS elements. Contiguous areas of operation have traditional linear features including identifiable, contiguous frontages and shared boundaries between forces. For the SBCT, operations in contiguous environments are characterized by relatively close distances between subordinate units and elements.

b. In noncontiguous areas of operation, subordinate units may operate in isolated pockets, connected only through integrating effects of an effective concept of operations. Noncontiguous areas of operation place a premium on initiative, effective information operations, decentralized security operations, and innovative logistics measures. Operations in noncontiguous environments complicate or hinder mutual support of combat, CS, and CSS elements because of extended distances between subordinate units and elements. The SBCT may be required to provide C2 to subordinate battalions and elements over extended distances, which may include deploying battalions individually in support of operations in the SBCT's area of influence or interest outside of the SBCT's AO.

6-14. ASYMMETRICAL THREATS

The SBCT must be prepared to face threats of an asymmetrical nature. Asymmetric threats occur when an enemy initiates operations against which friendly forces cannot respond effectively due to dissimilar values, organization, training, or equipment. The enemy may use the civilian population and infrastructure to shield it from fires. The enemy may also attack the SBCT and civilian population with weapons of mass

destruction. An enemy employing asymmetrical threats is most likely to be based in and target urban areas to take advantage of the density of civilian population and infrastructure. Other examples of an enemy employing asymmetrical threats include terrorist attacks; EW, to include computer-based systems; criminal activity; guerilla warfare; and environmental attacks.

6-15. COLLATERAL DAMAGE AND NONCOMBATANT CASUALTIES
During urban operations, SBCT commanders may be required to minimize unnecessary collateral damage and noncombatant casualties. This must be balanced with mission accomplishment and the requirement to provide force protection. SBCT commanders must be aware of the ROE and be prepared to request modifications when the tactical situation requires them. Changes in ROE must be rapidly disseminated throughout the SBCT. Commanders and leaders must ensure that changes to the ROE are clearly understood by all soldiers within the SBCT. All personnel must have an understanding of the laws associated with land warfare and the requirements of the Geneva Conventions.

6-16. TRANSITION FROM STABILITY OPERATIONS TO COMBAT OPERATIONS
SBCT commanders must be able to transition their forces quickly from stability to combat operations and vice-versa. For example, it may be tactically wise for commanders to plan a defensive contingency with on-order offensive missions for certain stability operations that may deteriorate. Subordinate commanders and leaders must be fully trained to recognize activities that would initiate this transition.

6-17. ENEMY THREAT
The SBCT will most likely face enemies that are supported by weak national economies and infrastructures seeking to achieve regional objectives that challenge US national objectives. Trends indicate an increasing availability and integration of more sophisticated technology and unorthodox operational approaches (asymmetry) by potential adversaries focused on the diversity and time sensitivity of humanitarian issues. Offsetting their inherent weaknesses, enemy forces will seek advantage in urban and restrictive terrain to remain dispersed and decentralized, adapting their tactics to provide them the best success in countering a US response. The enemy may apply several key principles to oppose US forces operating in urban environments. These principles include--

- Oppose entry into theater.
- Neutralize technological overmatch.
- Control the tempo.
- Change the nature of the conflict.
- Cause politically unacceptable casualties.
- Allow no sanctuary.
- Conduct dispersed and decentralized operations

These principles are discussed in detail in FM 90-10. The SBCT focuses on the tactical level of enemy urban operations. The enemy, in addition to conventional forces, may consist of--

- Unconventional forces.
- Paramilitary forces.
- Militia and special police organizations.
- Organized criminal organizations.
- Local civilians.

6-18. ENEMY TACTICS

While the composition of enemy forces may vary widely, many techniques will remain common to all (Figure 6-1). The following paragraphs set forth tactical tenets that may be used against US forces in the urban environment.

Use the Population to Advantage

Win the Information War

Manipulate Key Facilities

Use All Dimensions

Employ Urban-Oriented Weapons

Engage the Entire Force

Focus Attacks on Service Support and Unprotected Soldiers

Figure 6-1. Urban enemy tactics tenets.

a. **Use the Population to Advantage.** Enemy forces will use the population to provide camouflage, concealment, and deception for their operations. Guerilla and terrorist elements will look no different than any other member of the community. Even conventional and paramilitary forces will often adopt a civilian look to confuse friendly forces. The civilian population will also provide cover for enemy forces, enhancing their mobility in proximity to US positions. Enemy forces will take advantage of US moral responsibilities and attempt to make the civilian population a burden on logistical and force protection resources. The civilian population may also serve as a key intelligence

source for enemy forces. They will attempt to use civilians with access to US bases or perimeters to gain information on dispositions, readiness, and intent.

b. **Win the Information War.** Enemy forces will take advantage of the media presence to turn the sentiments of other countries against US forces. Video cameras, media reporters, Internet websites, and cellular phones are examples of tools the enemy may use to influence popular opinion. The enemy force's urban campaigns do not rely solely on tactical successes; they need only make the opposition's campaign appear unpalatable to domestic and world support to weaken its legitimacy.

c. **Manipulate Key Facilities.** Enemy forces will identify and use key facilities to shape the AO in their favor. Telecommunication sites, water treatment plants, as well as power generation and transmission sites are typical facilities enemy forces will target to gain a position of advantage against the SBCT. The force that controls media stations significantly improves its information operations abilities.

d. **Use All Dimensions of the Physical Environment.** Enemy forces will use all dimensions of the urban environment to attack the SBCT. Rooftops and tall buildings afford vantage points and ambush positions that exceed the maximum elevation of many weapons. Top attack positions allow the enemy to strike at vehicle vulnerable points and use enfilading fire against exposed, dismounted soldiers. Basement and other subterranean areas provide covered and concealed positions that allow access throughout the AO. Many positions will be below the minimum depression elevations of vehicle self-defense weapons.

e. **Employ Urban-Oriented Weapons.** Whether they are purpose-built or adapted, many weapons may have greater than normal utility in an urban environment while others may have significant disadvantages. The enemy's employment of weapons in an urban environment is inventive and varied. Small, man-portable weapons, along with improvised munitions, will dominate the urban environment. Figure 6-2, page 6-8, lists examples of enemy weapons favored during UO.
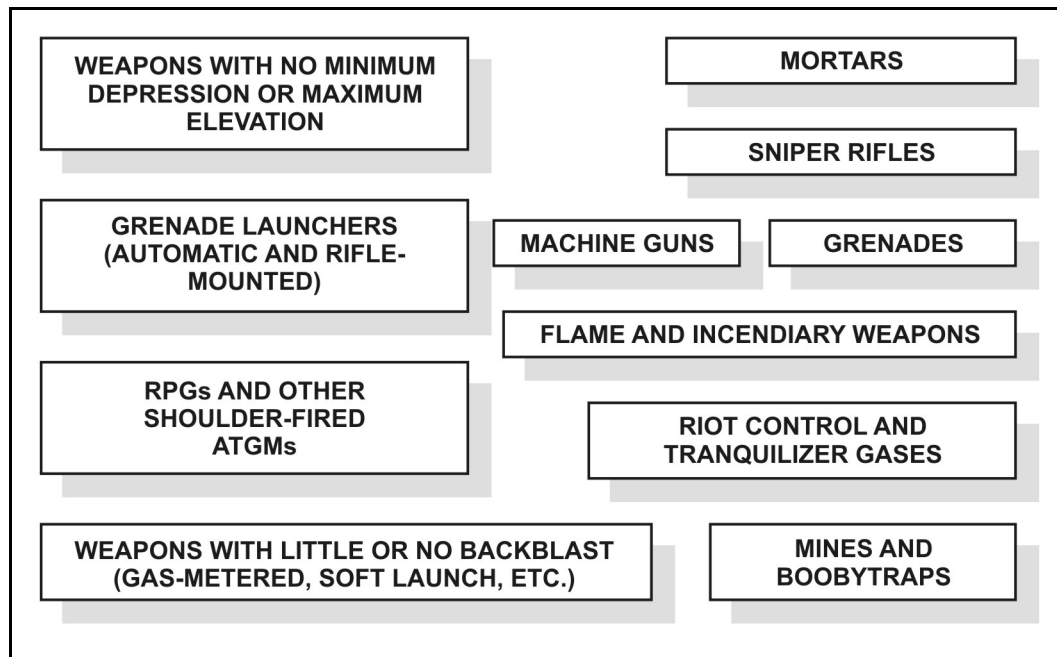
Figure 6-2. Favored enemy weapons

f. **Engage Entire Enemy Force.** Enemy forces may "hug" SBCT forces operating in an urban area to avoid the effects of high-firepower standoff weapon systems. Additionally, they may attempt to keep all or significant portions of the SBCT engaged in continuous operations to increase their susceptibility to stress-induced illnesses. UO, by their nature, produce an inordinate amount of combat stress. Casualties and continuous operations exacerbate this problem. Enemy forces that employ this tactic often maintain a large reserve to minimize the psychological impacts on their own forces.

g. **Focus Attacks on Rear Areas, Isolated Groups, and Individuals.** Enemy forces may seek to target support areas, small groups, and individual soldiers. Their focus on forces conducting resupply, casualty evacuation, and other sustainment activities in combination with the terrain and navigation challenges of the urban battlefield make these locations and soldiers more susceptible to enemy ambushes and raids. The aim of attacks on theses areas and groups is to inflict maximum casualties and induce psychological stress.

6-19. POTENTIAL ENEMY THREATS
The most dangerous potential enemy threats will remain those forces that have the capacity to prosecute full-scale combat actions. Weapons of mass destruction will be present and used where possible. Special operations forces (SOF), state controlled terrorist organizations, and paramilitary or guerilla forces will be a part of a strategy of simultaneous, distributed operations both inside and outside of the AO. The enemy may use mines and unexploded ordinance (UXO) to demoralize and hamper US forces.

6-20. URBAN MAPPING
Prior to entering an urban environment, the SBCT obtains or develops urban maps to assist in C2. The SBCT should attempt to gain access to city planner or civil engineer

maps that provide detailed information of the urban area. The urban maps, available through the supporting DTSS, whether digital, photographed, or sketched, include a reference system to identify buildings and streets (Figure 6-3). Naming conventions should be simple and allow for ease of navigation and orientation in the urban environment (for example, odd number buildings on left side of street, even numbers on right street). Street names should not be used as references as the signs can be missing or changed to confuse friendly forces. Initial map and aerial photograph reconnaissance pinpoint key terrain and other important locations that can be identified in the AO, to include--

- Safe havens.
- Hospitals.
- Police stations.
- Embassies.
- Other (friendly) facilities.
- Hazardous areas.
- Construction sites.
- Dangerous intersections.
- Bridges.
- Criminal areas.
- Major terrain features.
- Parks.
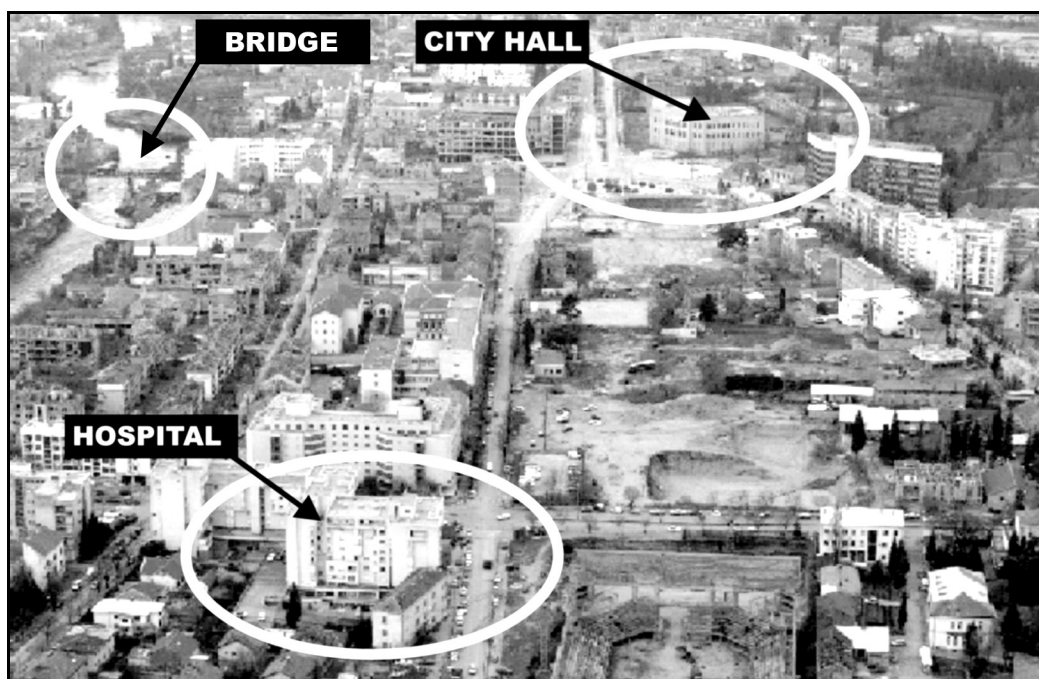- Industrial complexes.
- Airports.

Figure 6-3. Urban mapping using a photgraph.

The urban map also facilitates control in tracking units with greater detail and obtaining precise location updates since digital systems may be affected by urban terrain. The SBCT uses ISR assets or its reach capability to confirm and update the urban maps. Since most maps do not provide the level of detail necessary to conduct tactical operations within an urban environment, urban maps are critical. Specifically, the SBCT assesses avenues of approach in the urban AO. Included with the maps are overlays that categorize sections of the urban area by ethnicity, religious affiliation, and other prevailing characteristics that could affect operations (Figure 6-4, Figure 6-5, page 6-12, Figure 6-6, page 6-13, and Figure 6-7, page 6-14).

NOTE: Although urban mapping techniques are useful tools, the urban battlefield and noncombatant/social delineations will not be as simple as depicted in these figures. Friendly, neutral, and hostile groups will not live in strictly homogeneous communities, neighborhoods, or districts.
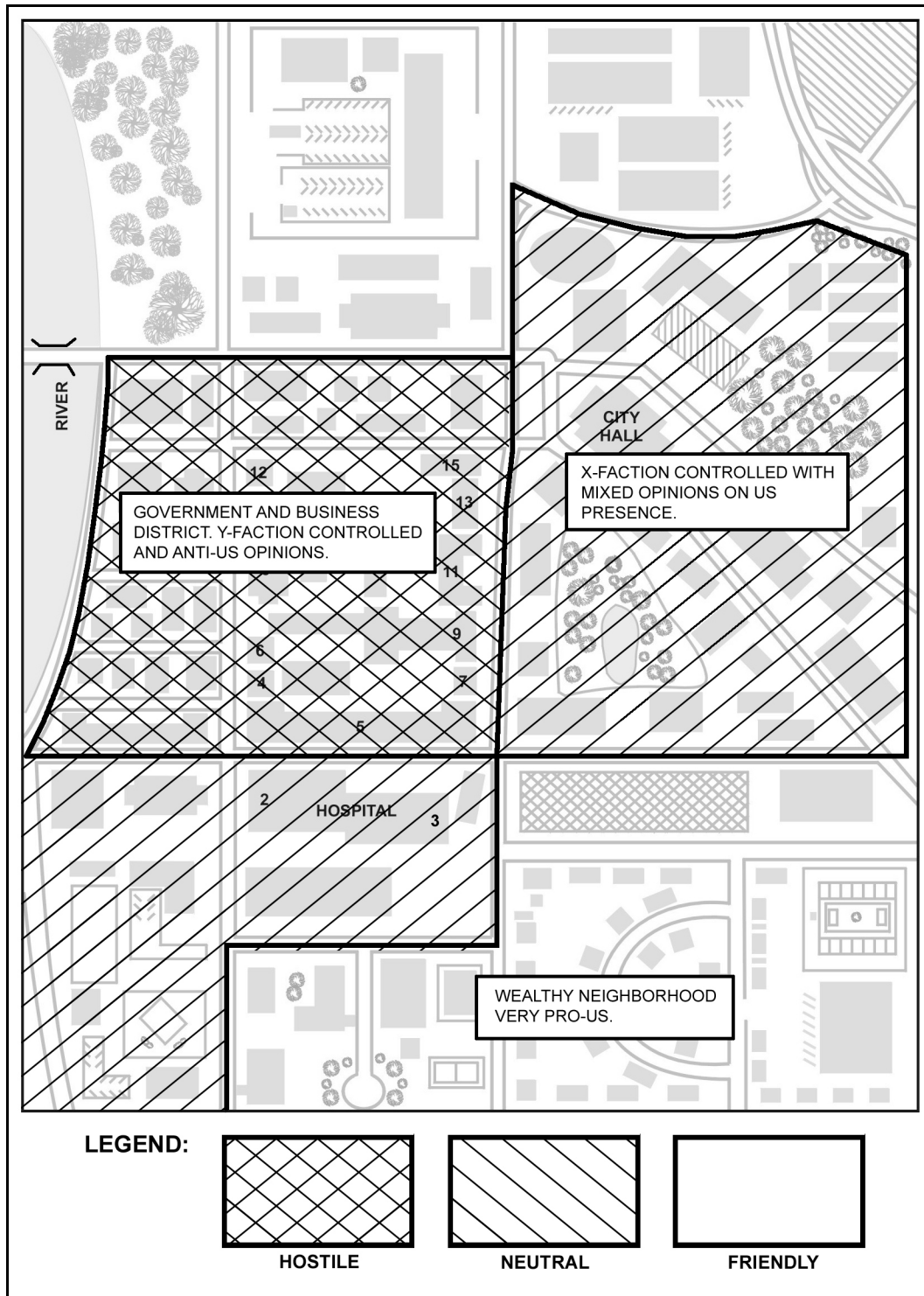
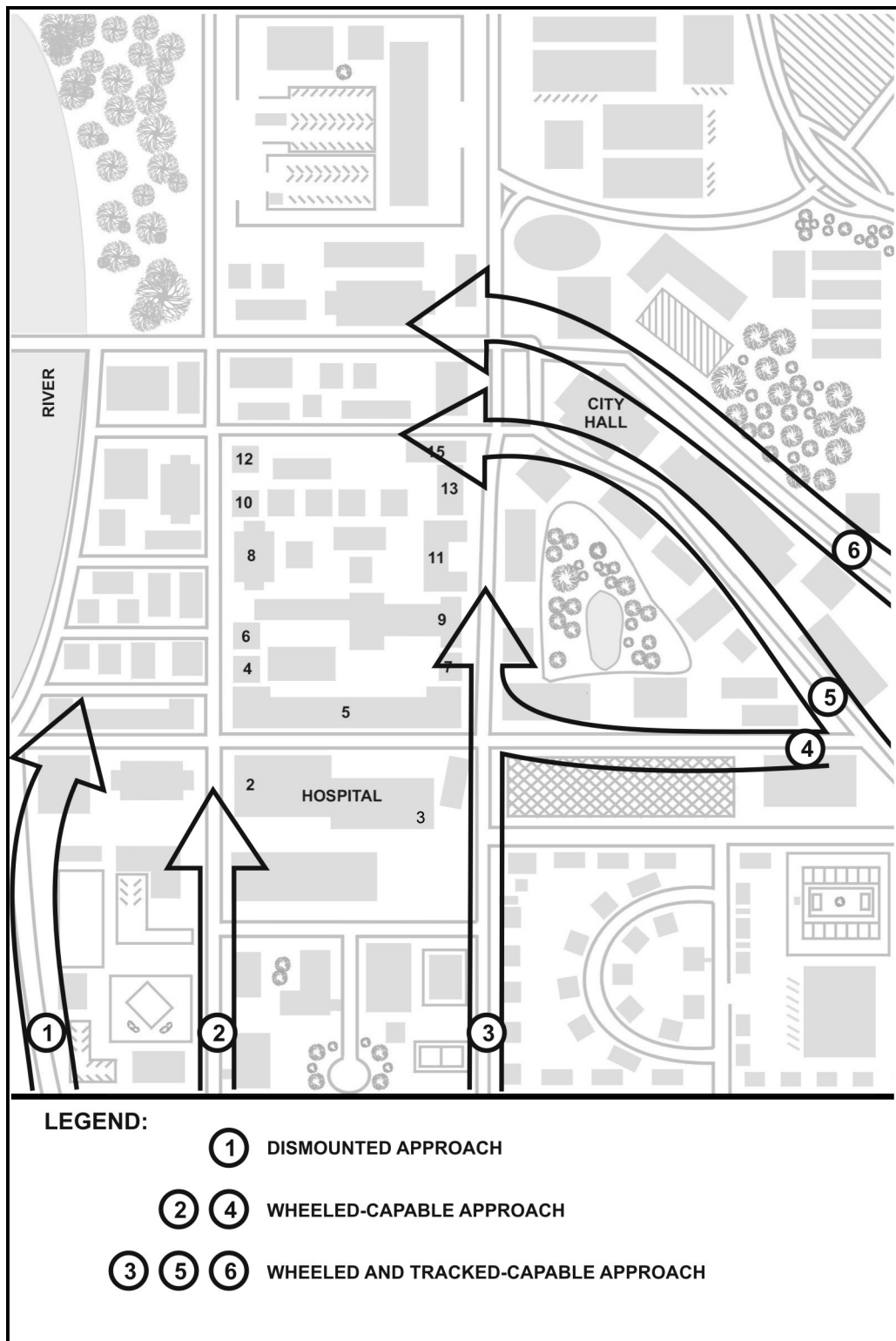**Figure 6-4. Example of population status overlay.**
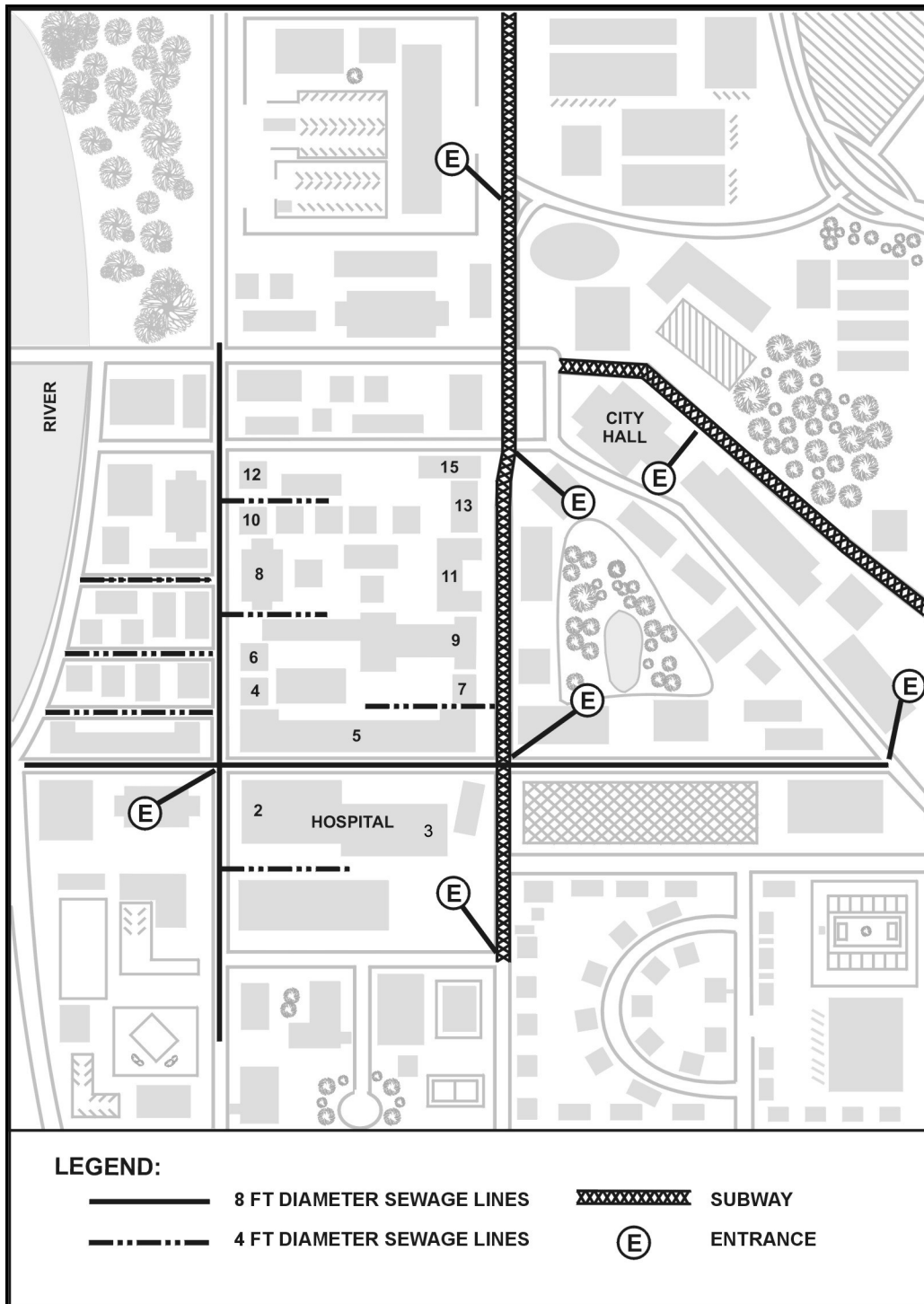
Figure 6-5. Avenues of approach in the urban area.

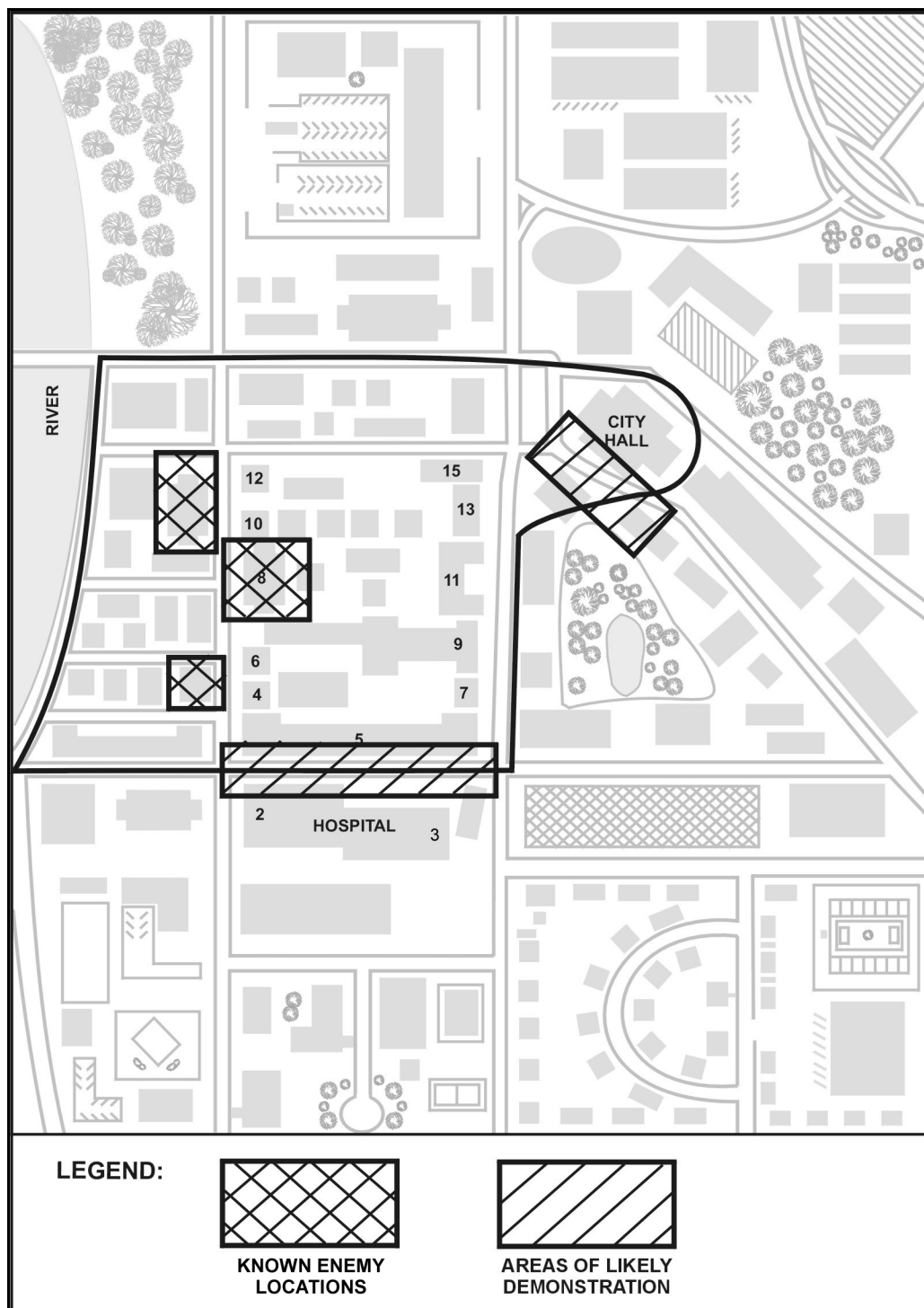**Figure 6-6. Sewer and subterranean overlay.**

Figure 6-7. Enemy overlay.

6-21. FIRES AND EFFECTS SUPPORT

There are numerous factors that the SBCT must consider when coordinating and planning targets that will support operations in an urban environment. The following are some fires and effects considerations during UO:

- Determine who controls each asset.
- Determine what effect on the civilian population is required.
- Exchange fires and effects plan and observer plan with adjacent units.
- Develop observer plan to include OPs in buildings, location of laser designators, and overwatch of trigger points.
- Identify location of hazardous sites, both above and below ground, such as fuel and industrial storage tanks, gas distribution lines, and any other areas where incendiary effects of detonating artillery and mortar rounds will start fires.
- Identify the general construction or composition of the buildings and road surfaces (may impact the type of munitions used).
- Determine where building masking, overhead power lines, or towers degrade C2 INFOSYS, GPS, or a compass from functioning.
- Determine if the use of obscurants and illumination will favor friendly units or the enemy.
- Determine if buildings or structures will require personnel to carry or use equipment not normally carried, such as field-expedient antennas, climbing rope, wire gloves, axes, or sledgehammers.
- Determine the requirements for radar coverage. Do radar zones need to be established? If so, where? For how long?

a. The SBCT uses a counterfire radar (CFR) capability to protect the force during missions in urban terrain. The primary purpose of the CFR is to detect, locate, monitor, and report hostile locations of enemy mortar, artillery, and other indirect fire assets. Its secondary mission is to provide observation for friendly fires and to provide "eyes on target" or "did-hit data" results of friendly indirect fires. The US Army's inventory of available CFRs include the AN/TPQ-36 countermortar and the AN/TPQ-37 counterbattery radars. The operating location of the CFR in urban operations may not be within the SBCT's operational perimeter. To improve its effectiveness and reduce masking, it may be necessary to position the radar outside the urban area.

b. In addition to the use of conventional munitions, precision-guided munitions (PGM) also must be carefully considered. The use of PGMs, however, is dependent on the availability of laser or infrared designator equipment.

6-22. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications in the urban environment require detailed planning that will allow units freedom of movement while maintaining C2 at the SBCT level. Terrain is identified along the approach route and in the urban AO that supports line of sight (LOS) communications. Retransmission sites, digital or FM, are then established on supporting terrain or structures to facilitate C2 during the initial entry into the urban area. The SBCT must plan for redundant communication methods to the C2 INFOSYS because of the effects of urban terrain on LOS communications. Manmade structures can create problems for single-channel radios and digital systems. These structures inhibit LOS radio communications by absorbing or reflecting transmitted signals. However, the urban environment may have exploitable advantages such as the availability of electrical power and commercial telecommunications networks. Electrical power generation stations and other emergency power systems are normally found in protected structures and are

probably usable. Enclosed areas offer excellent concealment and protection of C2 INFOSYS. Extensive commercial communications networks composed of miles of underground protected cable connecting central telephone exchanges are likely to be available, as well as a multitude of public service radio nets (such as police, fire, civil defense, taxi). These systems have existing antennas and retransmission stations. To communicate effectively and continuously, leaders must minimize limitations imposed by the urban environment and maximize the advantage of existing civil communications.

6-23. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS
The SBCT's higher headquarters plan the operational level of UO and have the primary responsibility of setting the conditions for tactical success. A framework used to visualize and conceptualize urban operations is--
- Assess.
- Shape.
- Dominate.
- Transition.

The SBCT commander may also use this methodology to plan his tactical urban operations. Whenever possible, close combat by maneuver units is minimized and the SBCT attempts to move from assess to transition. The elements of offensive operations are not phases. There is no clear line of distinction that delineates when the SBCT moves from one element to another. Properly planned and executed actions will involve all four elements. They may be conducted simultaneously or sequentially, depending on the factors of METT-TC. During offensive operations, the SBCT commander seeks to--
- Synchronize fires and effects and information operations.
- Isolate the enemy force.
- Destroy high pay-off targets.
- Use close combat, when necessary, against the enemy.

a. **Assess.** The SBCT primarily assesses the urban environment by conducting IPB to determine what may be decisive. (See FM 34-130 for detailed information on urban IPB) The SBCT augments IPB with the following:
- Division and or JTF reconnaissance and surveillance efforts and other shaping operations.
- Aggressive reconnaissance and surveillance effort by SBCT subordinate units.

- Analysis of existing intelligence and results of previous operations that impact current operations.

(1) Urban IPB may involve numerous agencies, some of which are external to the Department of Defense (DOD) and the US Government as well, such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international agencies (IAs). The SBCT must use its technical capability and operational expertise via the C2 INFOSYS to fuse multi-source information and intelligence, rapid analysis, and dissemination down to the lowest possible level in the chain of command. The SBCT identifies all relevant forces, their strengths and critical vulnerabilities, and identifies the critical nodes of the urban areas that may provide leverage if controlled. The IPB process must also take into account special considerations of the urban components, such as cultural mapping of the population and the location of sites that may pose hazardous materials (HAZMAT)

implications in addition to WMD. Aerial and space sensors will prove vital in this effort; however, extensive HUMINT gathering will be required to determine or verify information.

(2) Urban IPB must consider the impact of the noncombatants, whose presence in the urban area may be substantial and dynamic. Determining the ethnic and religious composition of the population, and if possible their intent (to flee or remain in the urban areas), may prove crucial. The SBCT must plan and prepare to deal with noncombatants, NGOs, and IAs. Human behavior is difficult to control on a mass scale; to do so with persons of a different culture under the strains of conflict can be nearly impossible. The SBCT will rely heavily on its HUMINT assets to assist in sorting out combatants and noncombatants.

(3) The ability of the SBCT commander to use the C2 INFOSYS to understand his AO and accurately assess information regarding the terrain and the presence of friendly, enemy, and noncombatant personnel is vital in developing the SBCT's COA. The considerations to develop PIR and IR will be unique in the urban environment and will place greater demand on the SBCT's ISR assets, especially HUMINT assets and IMINT sources. The SBCT must weigh the assigned IR with the time available to accomplish the mission in developing its plan. PIR and IR such as the following require the SBCT to focus all of its available ISR assets:

- Where are the enemy's critical C2 nodes located?
- What is the status of the key LOC leading into and within the urban area (both above ground and underground)?
- Where are the diplomatic embassies and missions located within the urban area?
- What is the location and status of subterranean avenues of approach within the urban area?
- Has the enemy force had any training on urban operations?
- What are the potential vulnerabilities to the infrastructure facilities?
- Where are the cross-mobility corridors within the urban area located?
- Where are the cultural, political, or symbolic facilities located?
- How many American citizens and third country nationals are located in the environment, and where are they?
- How does the local population (by faction) view us?
- What are the locations and status of hospitals and key medical personnel?
- Are there obstacles impeding movement along the routes to and from assembly areas?

These examples of PIR and IR demonstrate the need for detailed information collection planning. The majority of information may come from the SBCT's HUMINT assets. The key to successful urban reconnaissance is gathering information from outside the urban area and refining objectives as the SBCT approaches the AO. Developing the intelligence assessment of the urban area, though time consuming, will significantly increase the commander's ability to gain SU while reducing the effects of potential enemy threats to the SBCT.

b. **Shape.** The SBCT normally shapes the AO through isolation. Isolation seals off (both physically and psychologically) an enemy from his sources of support, it denies him freedom of movement, and it prevents his unit from having contact with other enemy

forces. The SBCT may be assigned the task of isolating the periphery of urban areas. The goal of isolating the periphery is to eliminate the enemy's ability to maneuver within the urban area, either to reinforce or to withdraw forces in contact. The SBCT commander must carefully determine the extent and the manner in which his forces can isolate the urban AO. The majority of forces are concentrated in decisive areas while sensors and reconnaissance forces are used to isolate the less likely avenues of approach.

(1) When the SBCT participates in shaping operations, the commander and staff must determine whether the efforts are sufficient for the SBCT to accomplish its mission(s) and shape for the decisive operation or whether additional efforts may be required.

(a) *Psychological Isolation of the Objective.* Isolation begins with the efforts of the SBCT's higher headquarters PSYOP and CA operations to influence enemy and civilian actions. The SBCT commander should consider using attached PSYOP teams to broadcast appropriate messages to the enemy and to deliver leaflets directing the civilian population to move to a designated safe area. These actions must be coordinated with the overall PSYOP plan for the theater and with the SBCT's targeting plan and must not sacrifice surprise. By itself, PSYOP are seldom decisive. They take time to become effective and often their effects are difficult to measure until after the actual attack, but they have usually proven to be successful. Under some conditions, PSYOP have achieved results far outweighing the effort put into them. Additionally, using attached CA teams can greatly enhance the SBCT commander's ability to influence the population, such as in determining whether noncombatants will seek sanctuary or remain in the urban area.

(b) *ISR Assets.* One of the more common methods of isolation involves the use of a combination of the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other ISR assets along avenues of approach to detect enemy forces as they attempt to enter or leave the urban AO. The SBCT can engage these enemy forces with indirect fires, aerial fires (if augmented), or a combination of the two, consistent with the ROE. This technique may be effective in detecting and stopping large enemy units from entering or leaving, but the cover and concealment the urban area provides will make it very difficult to completely isolate the urban AO. To be successful, this technique requires skillful reconnaissance units and responsive fires and effects.

(c) *Combination of Assets.* The most effective method of isolating urban AOs is through the use of a combination of maneuver units and ISR assets coordinated and synchronized through the C2 INFOSYS. The SBCT may direct subordinate units to move platoons and companies into positions where they can dominate avenues of approach with observation and direct fires. Smaller urban areas with clearly defined boundaries will make this method easier to accomplish. Larger urban areas may prevent a maneuver unit from gaining access to a position from which to stop enemy movement into or out of the objective area.

(d) *Fires and Effects.* In some instances, where the ROE permit, indirect and aerial (if augmented) fires may be the only available or appropriate method of isolation. This is the most destructive technique; it demands large amounts of ammunition, and it may only last for short periods of time. SBCT FECC can improve the effectiveness of this technique by careful selection of high pay-off targets and by the use of precision munitions. Mortar and artillery fires falling onto large buildings are not as effective in preventing enemy movement as fires falling into open areas. Targeting fires and effects against larger avenues, parks, and other open areas will force the enemy to move within

buildings. Artillery and aerial fires can be directed against buildings that the enemy is using for movement and observation. This will impede enemy movement but will not stop it. It can also hinder enemy supply efforts and make it difficult for the enemy to reinforce units under attack. Targeting obvious choke points, such as bridges or main road junctions, can also assist in the isolation effort. Smoke can be used to isolate the objective(s) from enemy observation, but it is difficult to predict what smoke will do in an urban area.

NOTE: Multiple flat polished surfaces in an urban area may degrade laser use. Close coordination must occur to obtain the desired effects of laser-guided precision munitions. Also, obscuration rounds may cause uncontrolled fires in the city and must be carefully planned.

(2) Isolating an enemy defending in an urban environment has significant psychological and physical effects. The enemy is forced to react as he realizes the significance of isolation. The enemy chooses between denying isolation by allocating resources and counterattacking or by conducting a breakout. If the enemy chooses to deny isolation, the SBCT commander may determine that the bulk of enemy resources are concentrated outside of the urban area rather than defending the city. The SBCT commander must visualize and describe the following:

- The number of forces required to effectively isolate assigned AOs.
- The allocation of augmenting assets to achieve penetration and seizure of objectives to take advantage of enemy dispositions within the urban area.
- The subsequent actions the enemy commander will take once he is successfully isolated.
- Effects of isolation on the urban population either as direct effect or as response of the enemy force being isolated.

c. **Dominate.** The SBCT uses the combined arms capability of its infantry battalions to dominate the urban environment (which consists of terrain, infrastructure, and society), consistent with the ROE, to defeat or destroy the enemy at decisive points and achieve the desired end state of the mission. Domination is achieved when all mission requirements are met and preeminent military control over the enemy, geographical area, or population is established. The SBCT seeks to dominate the enemy through well-planned isolation, aggressive ISR operations, and skillful use of its combined arms capability. The SBCT commander seeks to minimize the amount of street-to-street and house-to-house fighting that the infantry battalions must perform. FM 3-06.11 describes several techniques for conducting urban offensive operations, such as--

- Search and attack technique.
- Attack on a single axis.
- Attack on multiple axes.
- Cordon and attack.
- Fix and bypass.
- Multiple nodal attacks.

(1) Through his knowledge of the enemy and terrain, the SBCT commander can direct precision fires and effects to deny the enemy the ability to maneuver within the urban area and to destroy the enemy when he attempts to maneuver. The SBCT employs

forces in positions of tactical advantage to engage the enemy with direct and indirect fires as he is forced to react and withdraw unexpectedly. When the enemy exposes himself by unexpected movement, he no longer has the protective advantages afforded by the urban environment and loses his ability to leverage a coherent defense.

(2) The SBCT commander builds on the shaping effects of isolating the urban area by attacking key terrain from multiple directions. The SBCT commander may also attack multiple pieces of key terrain simultaneously or in a systematic and synchronized manner.

d. **Transition.** During transition, the SBCT continues to use all CS and CSS assets consistent with the mission end state and ROE to move from combat operations to stability (or support) operations in order to return the urban area back to civilian control. During this step the roles and use of SOF and CSS units, such as CA, PSYOP, medical, and MP, become more important with the requirements to maintain order and stabilize the urban area. The SBCT must plan and consider actions to deal with significant numbers of noncombatants and displaced civilians. Integrating NGOs and international organizations or IAs is vital to successful transition operations. Subordinate units will be consolidating, reorganizing, conducting area protection and logistical missions, and preparing for follow-on missions. The SBCT commander must visualize this transition from being a "supported" force to being the "supporting" force. Chapter 8 discusses stability and Chapter 9 discusses support operations in greater detail.

6-24. DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

The SBCT may be tasked to defend an urban area for various reasons to include protecting political institutions and economic infrastructures, protecting an urban population, or shaping conditions for decisive offensive operations. The SBCT can conduct the full range of defensive operations within a single urban area or in an AO that contains several small towns and cities. The SBCT commander must decide whether defending an urban area is needed to successfully complete his mission. Units defending in urban areas must prepare their positions for all around defense. Units employ aggressive security operations that include surveillance of surface and subterranean approaches. Units constantly patrol and use OPs to maintain effective security. Special measures are taken to control possible civilian personnel who support the enemy or enemy combatants who have intermixed with the local population. The SBCT commander also should consider the need to monitor or control civilian communications such as television, telephone, and cellular phone systems.

a. **Defending Villages, Strip Areas, and Small Towns.** The SBCT may also integrate villages, strip areas, and small towns into the overall defense, based on the higher headquarters' constraints and applicable ROE (Figure 6-8). These areas can be used as BPs or strongpoints. Also, forces can be effectively concealed in urban areas. CPs, reserves, CSS units, and SBCT combat units well positioned in urban areas are hard to detect.

(1) A defense in an urban area or one that incorporates urban areas normally follows the same sequence of defensive operations and is governed by the same principles contained in Chapter 5. The most common pattern of urban defense is an area defense that concentrates on denying enemy forces access to designated terrain for a specific time rather than destroying the enemy outright. The area defense often works effectively to

exhaust enemy resources and shape conditions for a transition to offensive operations. The mobile defensive pattern is rarely used, except as part of larger operations.
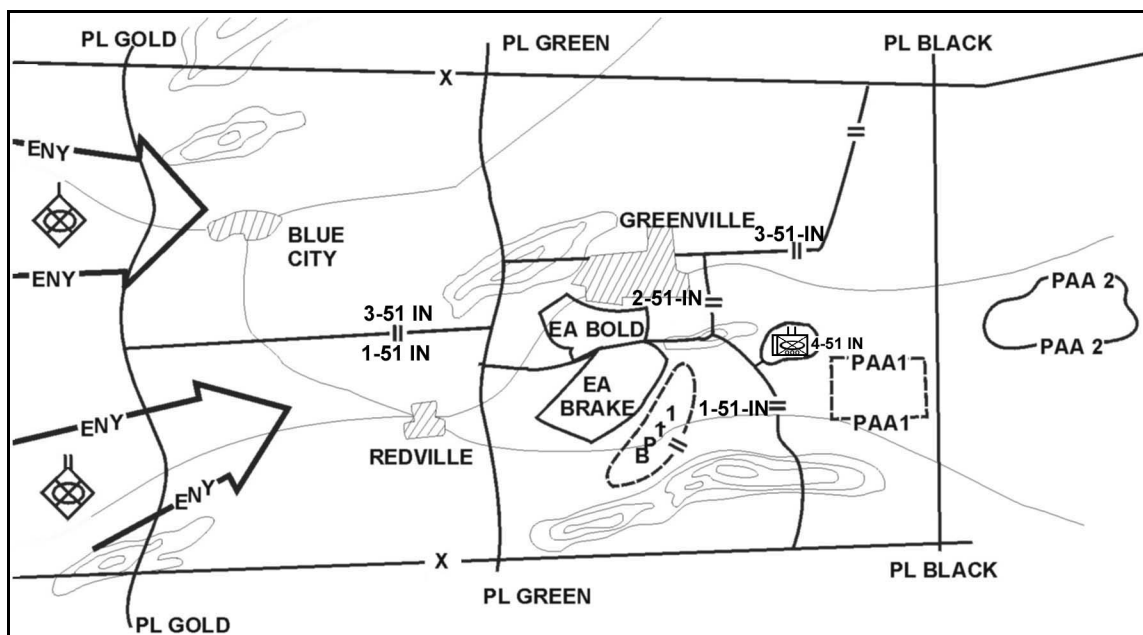

Figure 6-8. Integrating urban areas into a defense

(2) The SBCT plays a significant role in defending urban areas. Mounted, mobile SBCT forces are initially employed on the edge or flanks of the urban area to maximize its stand-off weapons capability. These forces provide overwatch for obstacles and mounted avenues of approach. Initially, the goal of the SBCT is to destroy enemy reconnaissance and cause the enemy to use combat forces to conduct reconnaissance of the urban area. By so doing, indirect fires and CAS can be placed on the enemy as he deploys his isolation forces or awaits information from his reconnaissance or combat forces.

(3) The SBCT counterattack force is used to regain key positions, block enemy penetrations, protect the flanks, or overwatch disengaging elements. As the fight develops, mounted, mobile SBCT forces move into prepared battle positions that allow for rapid repositioning and commencement of defense within the urban area. The characteristics of a successful urban defense, as described in Chapter 4, are preparation, security, disruption, concentration (massing effects), and flexibility.

(a) *Preparation*. The physical characteristics of urban terrain naturally enhance the combat power of defending units. The presence of structurally significant buildings within the urban area can create considerable obstacles to maneuver. With deliberate preparation of in-depth fighting positions using existing urban terrain, a formidable defense is developed.

(b) *Security*. The physical aspects of the urban environment are assessed in planning security operations. The compartmented nature of urban terrain limits observation and may cause additional forces or sensors to be allocated to ensure that mounted and dismounted approaches are adequately observed to prevent infiltration. The presence of civilians further complicates security matters for the commander as the enemy can

operate among noncombatants or coerce them into giving information on composition and disposition of brigade forces. An aggressive information operation within the urban AO can identify and neutralize these threats.

(c) *Disruption*. Defending forces use urban terrain to assist them in disrupting the enemy's attack through compartmentalization, inhibiting C2, and facilitating counterattacks. The physical aspects of urban terrain force the enemy to attack with little or no mutual support, limited communications, and difficulty maintaining synchronization of its elements.

(d) *Concentration* (*Massing Effects).* The urban environment facilitates the defender's requirements to mass effects (lethal and nonlethal). Using SU, the SBCT can plan EAs throughout the AO that are flexible enough to allow repositioning of assets in a timely and protected manner to mass their effects against the enemy. The enhancing effect of the terrain enables the positioning of relatively few defenders to achieve massed defensive firepower.

(e) *Flexibility*. Defensive flexibility results from detailed planning in the form of branches and sequels that include alternate and subsequent positions and counterattack options. The urban area permits rapid covered movement on interior lines and allows movement to and occupation of defensive positions with little or no preparation. The SBCT commander exploits enemy weaknesses developed during the fight and seizes the initiative to attack the enemy's vulnerable points through counterattack.

b. **Defending Large Urban Areas.** When defending large urban areas, the SBCT commander must consider that the terrain is more restrictive because buildings are normally close together. This requires a higher density of troops and smaller AOs than in open terrain. The density of buildings and street patterns will normally dictate an AO with a frontage of 6 to 10 blocks and a depth of 4 to 8 blocks. The SBCT normally assigns infantry battalion AOs. As in offensive operations, the SBCT commander may use the urban operations framework (assess, shape, dominate, and transition) to visualize, describe, and direct his defensive plan.

(1) *Assess.* In assessing the urban AO for defense, the SBCT commander conducts an aggressive ISR operation to determine the composition and intentions of the enemy. The enemy may intend to seize objectives within the city using speed and firepower to overwhelm defending forces, or it may begin by isolating the urban AO and its defenders. This assessment determines whether the commander's primary concern is preventing isolation, and if so, the allocation of forces necessary to defeat the enemy's isolation force. Additionally, the SBCT commander assesses the defensive qualities of the urban environment. His assessment is based on an analysis of the factors of METT-TC. As he visualizes and describes his concept, the SBCT commander should consider--

- Positions and areas that must be controlled to prevent enemy infiltration.
- Sufficient covered and concealed routes for movement and repositioning of forces.
- Structures and areas that dominate large areas.
- Areas such as parks and broad streets that provide fields of fire for MGS, Stryker vehicles, and other antiarmor weapons available to the SBCT commander during the operation.
- Position areas for artillery assets.
- C2 locations and location of INFOSYS nodes.

- Protected areas for CSS activities.
- Suitable structures that are defensible and provide good protection for defenders.

(2) **Shape.** The goal of shaping operations is to prevent isolation and set the conditions for separating attacking forces in space and time. The SBCT commander describes the concept that employs fires and effects to force the enemy to commit considerable resources, especially time, in attempting to isolate the AO. If the enemy attempts to attack before isolation, then the SBCT disrupts and separates the attacking forces and destroys him piecemeal as he arrives in the urban area.

(3) **Dominate.** Dominating the urban area in a defensive operation requires decisively defeating the enemy's attacks. Domination translates into denying enemy efforts to control the vital functions and critical infrastructure of the urban area. The SBCT employs precision indirect fires synchronized with direct fires from covered positions, oriented against selected avenues of approach and EAs. The combat power of the SBCT, augmented by the effects of its shaping operations, culminates in the enemy attack. When the attacking enemy forces have culminated, the SBCT mobile counterattack force isolates the enemy from reinforcement and then destroys him.

(4) **Transition.** At the conclusion of a successful defense, the SBCT consolidates and reorganizes in preparation for offensive operations. The same considerations for transition that were discussed in offensive operations apply to transition in the defense (See Paragraph 6-23d).

6-25. AVIATION OPERATIONS

Aviation forces can provide a significant advantage during UO. Ground-maneuver planners must consider the unique planning, coordination, and capabilities of Army aviation operations in an urban environment. Army aviation forces must be fully integrated in the MDMP to ensure effective combined arms employment. Infantry units may receive support from a variety of helicopters, including (but not limited to) the AH-64, OH-58D, MH-6, and MH-60. Attack helicopters can provide area fire to suppress targets and precision fire to destroy specific targets or breach structures. Attack helicopters can also assist with ISR and communications using their advanced suite of sensors and radios. Other supporting helicopters, such as the UH-60, CH-47, and MH-47, may also have weapon systems (7.62 MG, .50 cal MG, 7.62 minigun) that aid in the suppression of enemy forces when operating in urban terrain. Operational control of attack helicopter units will remain at the level of battalion or higher; however, attack helicopters may conduct direct air-to-ground coordination with companies and platoons during combat operations. See Appendix F, Aviation Support of Ground Operations, for an explanation of Army aviation urban operations.